

*International Education: Human Rights Collage  
in the Style of the Berlin Wall*

Approximately 90 minutes will be required to complete the following activity.
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**I. Content:**

I want my students to be able to:

- A. Understand and appreciate the art of German Expressionism and how it evolved.
- B. Identify images artists produced during this era  
<http://www.artcyclopedia.com/history/expressionism.html>
- C. Recognize paintings from this era  
<http://www.artcyclopedia.com/history/surrealism.html>
- D. Understand how the Berlin Wall brought about the art of German Expressionism  
<http://www.artmovements.co.uk/expressionism.htm>

**II. Prerequisites:**

In order to fully appreciate this lesson, the student should be familiar with:

- A. The history of the Berlin Wall (**Teacher Handout #1**)
- B. The introduction of the project and the vocabulary (**Teacher Handout #2**)

**III. Instructional Objectives:**

The student will understand what elements produce a collage (**Teacher Handout #3**)

**IV. Materials and Equipment:**

*Teacher: Teacher Handouts 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, and 6  
9 x 12 inch poster board or cardboard  
Magazines (Time, Newsweek, U.S.A Today)  
Scissors  
Glue  
Markers, crayons, paint  
Book binding tape or masking tape*

**V. Instructional Procedure:**

The student will:

- A. Create an artist's statement about the significance and symbolism in the collage panel.
- B. Be able to explain why he/she chose this message and its importance

**VI. Assessment/Evaluation:**

Upon completion of this lesson, students should be able to

- A. Create a message with intent and purpose
- B. Produce a message clear in visual content

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- C. Arrange pieces in the collage in an interesting fashion
- D. Demonstrate an understanding of the art of “surrealism”

**VII. Idaho Achievement Standards:**

- 9-12.VA.1.1.1 Identify representative visual works of art from a variety of cultures and historical periods
- 9-12.VA.1.1.3 Compare and contrast the historical, social, and environmental contexts that influence artistic expression
- 9-12.VA.1.1.4 Compare and contrast aesthetics from different cultural perspectives
- 9-12.VA.2.1.1 Develop and present basic analyses of works of visual art from structural, historical, and cultural perspectives
- 9-12.VA.2.1.2 Construct meaning and support well-developed interpretations of works of art with evidence.
- 9-12.VA.2.2.6 Write an artist’s statement that describes a series of works (background information on the artist, artists and movements that were influential on the work, significance of the body of work).
- 9-12.VA.3.2.2 Discriminate and select from a variety of symbols, subject matter, and ideas to communicate clearly personal statements.
- 9-12.VA.3.2.5 Create a body of work that develops a specific theme, idea or style of art.

**VIII. Art Standards for National Art Education Association:**

<http://artsedge.kennedy-center/teach/standards.cfm>

- Students conceive and create works of visual art that demonstrate an understanding of how the communication of their ideas relates to the media, techniques, and processes they use.
- Students apply symbols, subjects, and ideas in their artworks and use the skills gained to solve problems in their daily lives.
- Students differentiate among a variety of historical and cultural contexts in terms of characteristics and purposes of works of art.
- Students identify intentions of those creating artwork, explore the implications of various purposes, and justify their analyses of purposes in particular works

## BACKGROUND

The Berlin Wall stood as a divisive and controlling barrier after World War II separating East and West Berlin. This massive concrete wall stood 3-4 meters high and was almost 170 **kilometers miles** long. The heavily guarded and stark East Berlin side made it impossible to approach without penalty of death; however, the West side depicted quite another side of human nature. This side became a visual message, to all who would pass, of the injustices imposed by this wall. Graphic designs, creative artwork, and powerful messages filled nearly every inch of space on the West for those who chose to share their talents or emotions on this concrete canvas. In the tearing down of the wall in 1999, small pieces of the paintings from the murals were collected and saved. These are available in marketplaces for the public to see and purchase. (See web site):

<http://www.pbase.com/image/41038312>

Even today, as portions of the Berlin Wall have been left in place as a landmark for future generations to view, the emotionalism of what was depicted still evokes strong feelings at the injustices served during this tragic time in Germany's history. The art of German Expressionism evolved as a result of militarism, economic depression, rampant inflation, dictatorship, and the climactic horror of the Nazi era. Artists produced images based on emotion, with messages that delivered statements about the human condition. Expressionism was often shocking and rugged. It was designed to disturb the viewer to "react" and think about the message. Max Ernst (1891-1976), a German artist from this movement, used "collage" as a means to artistically express the frustration and anger of this time. "After the Rain" and "Eye of Silence" are two paintings that evolved during this period. Both of these artworks use terrifying "surrealistic" images depicting the effects of atomic warfare. As Germany moves forward with the next generations, it is now critical to teach issues of tolerance and acceptance of diversity.

Web site reference for Max Ernst collage work:

<http://www.eyeconart.net/history/surrealism.htm>

[http://www.artcyclopedia.com/artists/ernst\\_max.html](http://www.artcyclopedia.com/artists/ernst_max.html)

<http://www.abcgallery.com/E/ernst/ernst52.html> (The Eye of Silence)

<http://www.abcgallery.com/E/ernst/ernst27.html> (After the Rain)

Refer to **Teacher Handouts 4, 5, and 6.**

## **INTRODUCTION OF PROJECT**

Think about issues in our world you feel strongly about. Do you see areas of injustice and misery? Some concerns to consider might be: fear of pollution, effects of illness, despair of poverty, terror of violent crime, destruction by drug use or alcoholism, corruption of dishonesty, shallowness of materialism, injustice of bigotry, sexual harassment, hate crimes, horror of war, corrupt political leadership, etc.

Expressionists used color to evoke feelings of emotion and produce tension. Cool colors, such as greens and blues produce a sense of calm while warm colors, such as reds and yellows, tend to create nervousness and often express anger or excitement. Strong contrasts in color tend to generate stress and anxiety. Oftentimes words, phrases, or writings were also depicted with the artwork to add emphasis to the message.

### **VOCABULARY:**

**COLLAGE:** an art style in which various images, words, objects, etc. are pasted together in incongruous relationship for their symbolic or suggestive effect

**CONTOUR:** the outlining edges that make up the basic shape of an object

**SURREALISM:** realistic images placed together in dreamlike or unrealistic fashion

**JUXTAPOSITION:** the placing of objects close together or side by side

**EXPRESSIONISM:** an art form that is created to convey strong feelings or emotions

## **PROJECT**

The student will create a surrealistic design using the collage technique to express a personal view about a contemporary world issue dealing with Human Rights.

Materials needed: 9 x 12 poster board or cardboard, magazines, scissors, glue, markers, crayons, paint, book binding tape (or masking tape)

## **PROCESS**

The student will contour cut images from magazines to bring an assortment of figures, shapes, color, and words together. (All panels will need to be designed in a vertical format in order for them to align together for display) These should exhibit an emotional message about a particular world issue they can relate to. In “surrealistic style,” it will be important to put realistic images together in an “unrealistic” manner so the message can be even more bold and powerful. An example might be a human body with the head of an animal or legs represented by tree trunks. The juxtaposition (placing objects close together) of varying sizes and shapes will add interest to the design. When the student feels satisfied that these images begin to work together, glue them in place on the cardboard (panel). Add color with marker, crayon, or paint to unify the design and create any message you feel would benefit your cause. Lettering can be cut from magazines or drawn over portions of the collage to create a message that would add impact to the design.

When all students have completed their personal composition in collage, “hinge” the panels together with the tape (fan fold technique), so the panels will free stand. This will create a simulated “wall” that can be placed on a long counter in a library or window area of the school. This will provide a dramatic collection of symbols about human rights issues facing our world today.

## Max Ernst

(German, 1891-1976)



*Two Children Frightened By a Nightingale*



Max Ernst was one of the founding members of surrealism, who had previously been linked to the dada movement. Born in Germany, he practiced mainly in France, and fled Europe during the occupation of the Nazis (as did Dali and many other artists throughout Europe). During his career, he invented several methods which were instrumental to the surrealists. One new method he explored was "frottage", which involves making rubbings of textured surfaces, using the marks as chance starting points for an image. He also invented a similar technique called "decalcomania", which involved painting on glass and then pressing it directly onto the canvas to create a texture. This allowed his subconscious mind to see into the random pattern, thus creating images directly from his imagination, without any preconceived ideas. His paintings contain an element of magic, and sometimes terror. *Two Children Frightened By a Nightingale* is one of his most famous images, and perhaps one of the first paintings to ever combine 3-D elements into the 2-dimensional space. The *Temptation of St. Anthony* is yet another version of an image about the tortured saint. Created just after the end of WWII, I think that it may be also be comment about the monstrosities of war.



*Temptation of St. Anthony* 1945

[http://www.artcyclopedia.com/artists/ernst\\_max.html](http://www.artcyclopedia.com/artists/ernst_max.html)

# Eyecon Art

## Surrealism



Max Ernst



Rene Magritte



Salvador Dali

The artistic style of surrealism began as an official movement shortly after the end of the First World War. In its infancy, it was a literary movement, but soon found its greatest expression in the visual arts. In general, the style focuses on psychological states which resemble dreams and fantasy. The artists were influenced by psychological research of Sigmund Freud and Carl Jung, who sought to explain the workings of the mind through analysis of the symbols of dreams. Instead of using psychoanalysis to cure themselves of any disturbances, the surrealists saw the unconscious as a wellspring of untapped creative ideas. "A dream that is not interpreted is like a letter that is not opened" is a famous quote from Freud. The surrealists were less interested in interpretation of their dream symbols than they were in the expressive capacity of such states.

The surrealists admired the artwork of the insane for its freedom of expression, as well as artworks created by children. They admired previous artists such as Henri Rousseau, whose naive and self-taught works always contained an element of surreal fantasy. In addition, they looked for inspiration from masters of the Renaissance such as Hieronymus Bosch and Pieter Brueghel, whose fantastic elements can easily be described as surreal. The word "surreal", in fact, means "above reality". In other words, the artists believed that there was an element of truth which is revealed by our subconscious minds which supersedes the reality of our everyday consciousness.

<http://www.eyeconart.net/history/surrealism.htm>



## Art Movements

### EXPRESSIONISM

**KEY DATES: 1905-1925**

A term used to denote the use of distortion and exaggeration for emotional effect, which first surfaced in the art literature of the early twentieth century. When applied in a stylistic sense, with reference in particular to the use of intense colour, agitated brushstrokes, and disjointed space. Rather than a single style, it was a climate that affected not only the fine arts but also dance, cinema, literature and the theatre.

Expressionism is an artistic style in which the artist attempts to depict not objective reality but rather the subjective emotions and responses that objects and events arouse in him. He accomplishes his aim through distortion, exaggeration, primitivism, and fantasy and through the vivid, jarring, violent, or dynamic application of formal elements. In a broader sense Expressionism is one of the main currents of art in the later 19th and the 20th centuries, and its qualities of highly subjective, personal, spontaneous self-expression are typical of a wide range of modern artists and art movements.

Unlike Impressionism, its goals were not to reproduce the impression suggested by the surrounding world, but to strongly impose the artist's own sensibility to the world's representation. The expressionist artist substitutes to the visual object reality his own image of this object, which he feels as an accurate representation of its real meaning. The search of harmony and forms is not as important as trying to achieve the highest expression intensity, both from the aesthetic point of view and according to idea and human critics.

Expressionism assessed itself mostly in Germany, in 1910. As an international movement, expressionism has also been thought of as inheriting from certain medieval artforms and, more directly, Cézanne, Gauguin, Van Gogh and the fauvism movement.

The most well known German expressionists are Max Beckmann, Otto Dix, Lionel Feininger, George Grosz, Ernst Ludwig Kirchner, August Macke, Emil Nolde, Max Pechstein; the Austrian Oskar Kokoschka, the Czech Alfred Kubin and the Norwegian Edvard Munch are also related to this movement. During his stay in Germany, the Russian Kandinsky was also an expressionism addict.

<http://www.artmovements.co.uk/expressionism.htm>

### REPRESENTATIVE ARTISTS:

Georges Rouault  
[Oskar Kokoschka](#)  
[Egon Schiele](#)

[Franz Marc](#)  
Ernst Ludwig Kirchner

[Edvard Munch](#)  
[Marc Chagall](#)

